

Message Text

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SUBJECT: LAWS GOVERNING FIREARMS IMPORTATION

REF: A) STATE 255875; B) STATE 205916; C) STATE 177789

1. ETHIOPIA'S BASIC LAW REGARDING FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION WAS PUBLISHED IN THE NEGARIT GAZETA OF SEPTEMBER 30, 1958.

ACCORDING TO EPMG OFFICIALS, THIS LAW IS NO LONGER IN EFFECT, EVEN THOUGH NO LAW REVISING IT HAS AS YET BEEN SUBSTITUTED. AT PRESENT, NO GOVERNMENT-OWNED OR COMMERCIAL FIRM, FOREIGN OR DOMESTIC, WHOLESALE OR RETAIL, IS LICENSED TO IMPORT OR EXPORT FIREARMS OR AMMUNITION OF ANY TYPE FOR PRIVATE USE OR SALE.

THE LAST COMMERCIAL FIRM LICENSED TO IMPORT FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION WAS THE GASHA PRIVATE LIMITED COMPANY. ITS LAST IMPORT (50,000 ROUNDS OF .45 CALIBER AMMUNITION FROM SMITH AND WESSON OF SPRINGFIELD, MASS.) OCCURRED IN DECEMBER 1974 AND WAS FOR GOVERNMENT USE. THIS FIRM HAS SINCE BEEN DISSOLVED. THE OFFICIE RESPONSIBLE FOR ISSUING IMPORT/EXPORT LICENSES IS THE SECURITY DIVISION OF THE MINISTRY OF THE INTERIOR (MOI).

2. THERE IS NO LAW FORBIDDING A PRIVATE CITIZEN FROM IMPORTING FIREARMS. THE FOLLOWING ARE THE PROCEDURES REQUIRED: AN IMPORT PERMIT MUST BE OBTAINED FROM THE SECURITY DIVISION OF THE MOI FOR EACH WEAPON AND CALIBER OF AMMUNITION TO BE IMPORTED AND AFTER RECEIPT OF THE IMPORT PERMIT, WEAPON(S) AND AMMUNITION WILL BE CLEARED THROUGH CUSTOMS AND REGISTERED AT THE MUNICIPALITY OF RESIDENCE. PRIVATE CITIZENS WHO ALREADY

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HAVE FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION ARE REQUIRED TO REGISTER THEM WITH

THE MUNICIPALITY OF RESIDENCE. THEY THEN MUST GO TO THE SECURITY DIVISION OF THE MOI TO GET A PERMIT TO CARRY THE FIREARM AND AMMUNITION. ONE PERSON MAY PURCHASE A WEAPON AND AMMUNITION FROM ANOTHER BUT HE MUST TRANSFER THE MOI PERMIT TO HIS OWN NAME. FOR THE DURATION OF THE PRESENT STATE OF EMERGENCY A PERSON WHO WISHES TO TRANSPORT A WEAPON FROM ONE MUNICIPALITY TO ANOTHER HAS TO OBTAIN A LETTER OF PERMISSION FROM THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, INDICATING WHERE HE IS GOING AND FOR HOW LONG. DOCUMENTATION, PHOTOGRAPHS, AND PRESENTATION OF THE WEAPON(S) AND AMMUNITION ARE REQUIRED IN ALL OF THE ABOVE PROCEDURES. THERE ARE NO RESTRICTIONS AS TO CALIBER OF WEAPON TO BE IMPORTED, SO LONG AS IT IS NOT AUTOMATIC OR SELF-LOADING. MINORS AND DEPENDENTS MAY NOT OWN WEAPONS. THE FOLLOWING QUANTITIES OF WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION MAY BE IMPORTED: ONE RIFLE; ON SHOTGUN; ONE PISTOL OR REVOLVER; AND 100 ROUNDS NF AMMUNITION PER PERSON.

3. DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL MAY IMPORT WEAPONS AND AMMUNITION FOR THEIR OWN USE. THE PROCEDURES TO BE FOLLOWED ARE THE SAME AS THOSE FOR A PRIVATE CITIZEN WITH THE FOLLOWING EXCEPTIONS; APPLICATION (UNDER A MISSION SEAL) TO IMPORT FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION MUST BE MADE TO THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (MOFA), WHICH FORWARDS THE APPLICATION TO THE SECURITY DIVISION OF MOI; THE MOI DECIDES ON THE APPLICATION AND RETURNS IT TO THE EMBASSY OF THE INDIVIDUAL CONCERNED, THROUGH THE MOFA; THE WEAPON AND AMMUNITION ARE THEN CLEARED THROUGH CUSTOMS AND REGISTERED WITH THE MUNICIPALITY. THE WEAPON MAY NOT BE SOLD AND MUST BE EXPORTED AT THE END OF THE INDIVIDUAL'S TOUR OF DUTY.
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